GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2857
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Air Pollution
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a)whether it is a fact that India does not have any mechanism to bring down peak air pollution levels and if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
(b)whether a lot of standardization work needs to be done to get all cities and all monitoring stations comparable; and
(c)if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (c) The Government has notified National Ambient Air Quality Standards envisaging 12 pollutants to control air pollution under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. These norms have been formulated to adopt uniform methodology for measurement of air pollutants with the help of network of 612 monitoring stations set up across the country. The Government has also notified emission standards for on-road vehicles and mass emission standards for new vehicles under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. The same are enforced by Transport Departments of the State Governments through Pollution Under Control (PUC) regime. Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has set up a mechanism called 'Environmental Surveillance Squad' (ESS) programme for carrying out surprise inspections of industrial units based on adoption of a uniform approach and elimination of subjectivity in scheduling of inspection. The role of State Pollution Control Boards / Pollution Control Committees is critical in enforcing the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

The steps taken by the Government to mitigate air pollution in cities in the country include the following:-
(i) Notification of National Ambient Air Quality Standards envisaging 12 pollutants;
(ii) Formulation of environmental regulations / statutes;
(iii) Setting up of monitoring network for assessment of ambient air quality;
(iv) Introduction of cleaner / alternate fuels like gaseous fuel, ethanol blend etc. replacing petrol and diesel;
(v) Promotion of cleaner production processes;

Taking note of the gravity of Air Pollution, the Government has taken some more measures which include:
(i) Launched National Air Quality index by the Prime Minister in April, 2015 starting with 10 cities and now extended to 23 cities;
(ii) Implementation of Bharat Stage IV (BS-IV) norms in 63 selected cities and universalization of BS-IV by 2017;
(iii) Decision taken to leapfrog directly from BS-IV to BS-VI fuel standards by 1st April, 2020;
(iv) Comprehensive review of all Waste Management Rules including Municipal Solid Waste, Plastic Waste, Hazardous Waste, Bio-medical Waste and Electronic Waste.
(v) Ban on burning of leaves, biomass, municipal solid waste;
(vi) Promotion of public transport network of metro, buses, e-rickshaws and promotion of car pooling, Pollution Under Control, lane discipline, vehicle maintenance;
(vii) Revision of existing environmental standards and formulation of new standards for prevention and control of pollution from industries.
(viii) Regular co-ordination meetings at official and ministerial level with Delhi and other State Governments within the NCR.
(ix) Issuance of directions under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and under Section 18(1)(b) of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.
(x) Installation of on-line continuous (24x7) monitoring devices by major industries.

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